

# Washington State Children's Administration and Foster Parent Quarterly Regional Consultation Forum (HB 1624)

March 19, 2013

## Minutes

Present: Chris Pope – Fostering Together (FT); Dru Powers – FT; Laurie Palmquist - DLR; Joey Charlton - DCFS; Amber Sherman - FT; Meaghan Flowers - FP; Carol Plischke – Olive Crest/FT; Barb Sheffler - DCFS; Kerry Bryant- 1624 rep; Shelby Carrell – 1624 rep; Melike Bludau - FP; Rick Holcomb - DLR; Tim Abbey – AA/DCFS; Kris Randall – AA/DCFS; Launi Burdge – AA/DCFS; Sandy Rowe - DLR; Kimberly McNaughton – FT; Heather Adams – OC/FT Intern; Taylor McFarland – OC/FT Intern.

### Welcome and Introductions:

**Training update** – handout from Renee' Siers in her absence

- **PRIDE Pre-Service** schedule handed out for March - May 2013 for the Spokane, Colfax and Clarkston offices. Jan Hinkle-Rodriguez will be asked to submit the training schedule for all of Region 1 North at future HB 1624 meetings.
- **So you have your First Placement Training Now What?** Training is scheduled for 4/10/2013 from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm. in Spokane. Another class is scheduled in Spokane on 4/24/13 from 5:30 – 8:30 p.m. Requirement is for all foster parents to have training.
- **Parenting Plus** schedule handed out – there are still classes for Module 4 on Discipline in April and Modules 5 and 6 in May.
- Training list is on FPAS Website, as well as, the state website at <http://www.dshs.wa.gov/ca/fosterparents/preservice.asp> or call 363-4821 for more information.

### Recruitment Update: Chris Pope with Carol Plischke of *Fostering Together*

- Fostering Together is now fully staffed in Region 1 with Chris Pope as the regional coordinator over Region 1 North and South; Dru Powers as the FIRST representative for Region 1 North and South as well as a support person out of the Spokane office; Linda Rogers is the Community Liaison for Region 1 North; Amber Sherman is the FP Liaison for the greater Spokane area (Spokane and Lincoln counties); Kimberly McNaughton is the FP Liaison for the Newport, Colville and Omak offices; Angie Derting is the FP Liaison for the Clarkston, Colfax and Moses Lake offices; and the newest hire is Wendy White as the FP Liaison for the Wenatchee office. All liaisons also oversee the support groups in their areas. All of this is overseen by Marilyn Hatfield as the Fostering Together State Director and Carol Plischke as the Olive Crest State Program Director.
- Recap of some of the events and activities for Fostering Together:
  - The Spokane Orphan Summit was a great success with more than 330 in attendance.
  - Liaisons have been busy following up twice a month to any prospective foster parent as well as attending orientations when they are able to.
  - Release of Information forms are signed at that time. It was agreed at the regional development committee morning earlier this day that DLR will include an ROI in packets outside of Spokane.

- Donations Galore – Shelby Carrell was the lead on donations by her church (several area LDS churches who took this on as part of a service project. A boy scout also participated and built shelving for them as part of his Eagle Project. A large packing truck delivered hundreds of items for the Clothing Perk and Teen Closet!
- The Spokane Rotary also donated \$2,500 for the Clothing Perk. FP Cindy Gardner has already been shopping and so far purchased 300 pieces of clothing for roughly \$660 from J.C. Penney's! Barb said the one in Clarkston is generous as well.
- To encourage more use of the clothing rooms it was suggested that children visit there before returning home as well.
- **Activities in the Planning:**
  - Day in May – this event is well underway in the planning with free activities, discounts etc for caregivers in the greater Spokane area.
  - Fill the Sock – is also underway for the month of April – Child Abuse Prevention month. Socks are being distributed as a small display for check out registers with a place to donate your change to help purchase new clothing for kids in care. This information is being distributed throughout the region and can be duplicated.
  - Community Summit - Linda Rogers along with DCFS staff Charina Carothers and DLR staff Rick Holcomb and Laurie Palmquist are leading a committee to put on a community summit to address the need for a more diverse representation of foster homes. Flyers are being distributed throughout the Spokane area to community partners for this event on Thursday, April 25 from 9 a.m. to 12 noon at The Emmanuel Family Life Center; 631 S. Richard Allen Court. Rick explained how we will address barriers and ways to overcome them.

### **Issues/Questions/Other –**

- ❖ Continue on the subject of children being returned home/ transferred/ moved from current foster home without notice given to foster parent (see addendum at the end)
  - There was discussion on general practice vs exceptions
  - There was agreement there would be exceptions when safety is an issue or the caregiver is under investigation.
- ❖ Is it possible to explore the following as a policy:
  - If a child has resided in a foster family home for less than 90 days or if, due to one or more of the circumstances above, it is not possible to give five days notification, the social worker shall notify the foster family home of proposed placement changes as soon as reasonably possible.
  - It was decided to take it a step further and recommend the policy be the same for 0 – 89 days as it is for 90+ days provided there are no safety concerns.
  - The proposed policy would read almost identical (see the current one at the end in the addendum).

### **Here is the proposed policy to take to the state HB 1624:**

*A. Notification to Foster Parents When Moving a Child*  
*1. When a child has been placed in a foster family home and has then resided in the home 0 - 89 consecutive days, the social worker shall notify the foster family at least five days prior to moving the child to another placement, unless one of the following applies: a. A court order has been entered requiring an immediate change in placement; b. The child is being returned home; c. The child's safety is in jeopardy; d. The child is residing in a receiving home or a group/ rehabilitative care facility.*

- ❖ **What is the state policy on length of time children are on the school buses** when being transported to and from school?
  - This was discussed at length. It was agreed two hours for a kindergartner was too long. It was suggested to consider the following since it is often court ordered for the child to remain in her/his own school which could mean a long bus ride:
    - Consider – what’s in the best interest of the child?
    - Is it court ordered?
    - Are there alternatives? A suggestion was made to call the school and/or bus scheduler to discuss options to shorten the rides.
    - Caregivers can attend court as well as submit a report. This report could include transportation hardships.
- ❖ **FP/Caregiver Newsletter** will be out in early April. Suggestions were made to include the following:
  - Updated phone lists
  - Who to call for what?
  - Tip Sheet information

### **Statewide Consultation Meetings –**

- ❖ Region 1 North representatives – Kerry Bryant and Shelby Carrell
- ❖ Update from the January meeting – they took no issues forward so there was not much to report
- ❖ Review of issues going forward to statewide meetings
  - What are the two issues that you would like to have taken to the next statewide meeting?

It was agreed to just take the one issue forward at this time.

**Next Regional Meeting** – Tuesday, June 18 in Chewelah at the Chewelah City Council; 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

**Next Statewide Meeting** – Monday, April 22; 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm in Olympia at OB-2 in the Service Level 04 room. Video conference for Region 1 reps available at DSHS at 8517 E. Trent.

ITEM #1:

I would like to continue on the subject of children being returned home/ transferred/ moved from current foster home without notice given to foster parent. Thankfully, at the last meeting, we had a lengthy discussion on this and I appreciate all who commented. However, even with the Foster Parent Advisory Board Meeting minutes emailed with the policies and procedures on this, I can't help but think....let's change that policy. It does nothing in favor of retention of foster parents and most importantly it harms the children. I would like to pay attention to revamping the policy when a child has not resided more than 90 days. Maybe I'm beating a dead horse. Let me know what you think. I feel this is something foster parents can work together with the dept. and come up with a resolution. I also think this is happening state-wide. With language in the policy as it states, it leaves a lot to be determined by each individual case worker. I would like to see something more direct.

*\* Discussed issue. Addressing depends on case by case basis. There is a CA Policy and Procedures Guide 45303: that requires a 5 day notice when a child is being moved provided they have been in the home at least 90 consecutive days - unless ordered by the Court to be done immediately or in the case of abuse or neglect.*

*\* Agreed that 5 days is a courtesy regardless of the number of days the child has been in the home. The recommendation was for foster parents to discuss issue with worker and if that doesn't work move up the chain.*

*\* The specific policy states:*

*A. Notification to Foster Parents When Moving a Child*

*1. When a child has been placed in a foster family home and has then resided in the home for at least 90 consecutive days, the social worker shall notify the foster family at least five days prior to moving the child to another placement, unless one of the following applies: a. A court order has been entered requiring an immediate change in placement; b. The child is being returned home; c. The child's safety is in jeopardy; d. The child is residing in a receiving home or a group/ rehabilitative care facility.*

2. If a child has resided in a foster family home for less than 90 days or if, due to one or more of the circumstances above, it is not possible to give five days notification, the social worker shall notify the foster family home of proposed placement changes as soon as reasonably possible.

ITEM # 2: What is the state policy on length of time children are on school buses when being transported to and from school? *This probably needs to be addressed at a local level first.* We have children on buses for 2 hours one way!!! to get the children to the school they were attending before being removed by CPS. What do the other regions do for transport? Do they have the HEART program statewide? At what point is it detrimental to the child that he/she is on a bus for 4 hours a day? Maybe changing schools should be looked at if a child will be on a bus for more than an hour one way? Let's investigate the state policy on keeping the children in their school of origin and see where we can go from there.